

*If your son or daughter is being suspended or expelled from a Metro School, the school must follow certain rules.*



**Knowing those rules will allow you to advocate for your child and will give you tools to help your child succeed in school!**

**Note: If your child has a disability or gets special education services, he or she is also protected in the discipline process by state and federal law. Contact us for more information.**

*Still have questions?  
Call us!*



The Kids' Rights Program

615-880-3710

Advocacy and  
Legal  
Representation  
for Parents and  
Students

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Has your child been expelled for a **Zero Tolerance** offense? Know your child's rights!



***Zero Tolerance  
Expulsions in  
Metro Nashville  
Public Schools***

### **What if my student is being suspended for more than ten days?**

If your student is being suspended for more than ten days, this is called an **expulsion**. The principal must tell you about your right to **appeal** the expulsion and the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) that your student can attend.

### **What is a Zero Tolerance offense?**

A Zero Tolerance (ZT) offense is a serious violation of the MNPS Code of Conduct that means your student will automatically be expelled for one (1) calendar year.

### **What types of offenses are ZT?**

In Metro Nashville Public Schools, the following offenses are Zero Tolerance:

- Bringing a handgun or rifle to school
- Assaulting a staff member of the school
- Possession or use of illegal drugs
- Bringing an explosive (such as a bomb or grenade) to school

### **How long do I have to appeal the decision?**

You have **5 days** from the time you receive notice of the expulsion **and** of your right to appeal. The notice is usually a paper called "Notice of Expulsion for More than Ten (10) school days."

### **For what reasons can I appeal?**

You can appeal if your student did not commit the offense. You can also appeal if you feel the punishment is too harsh.

### **How do I request an appeal?**

On your student's expulsion notice, you will see the name and number of the Discipline Coordinator. You may call him or her directly, send an email, or send a letter. If you call, make sure to keep a written record of the phone call.

### **How long will they take to set up an appeal?**

The Discipline Coordinator must set the appeal within **10 days of the first day of the expulsion**. This means the appeal could happen very quickly!

### **What will happen at the first appeal?**

The first appeal will be heard by a group of three principals from other schools. The school will tell their side of the story, and your student will tell his or her side of the story. Then, the board will ask questions and decide if the incident really happened as the school says it did. If the Board finds that your child did not commit the ZT offense, they will overturn the expulsion. If the Board finds that your child did commit the offense, the Board cannot shorten the length of expulsion, but you can appeal again. **You have the right to bring an attorney to all discipline appeals.**

### **If my student loses the first appeal, can I appeal again?**

Yes, you can appeal again by asking for a Level Two Appeal in writing. Send your request to the Discipline Coordinator. A school administrator will hear the appeal. You can appeal if your student's Due Process rights were violated (see our suspension brochure), as a plea for mercy, or if you have new evidence. At this appeal, the administrator can recommend that the length of the expulsion be shortened.

### **What happens if my student loses the second appeal?**

If your student loses the second appeal, you can write a letter asking the Board of Education to hear your case a third time.

### **What can I do if my student's expulsion is not overturned through the appeal process?**

The Director of Schools can shorten the length of your child's expulsion for a ZT offense. You can send a letter asking for a "modification of expulsion" to Dr. Jesse Register, Director of Schools at 2601 Bransford Ave, Nashville, TN 37204. Explain why the expulsion should be shortened, what your child has learned in the situation, and how things will be different when he or she returns to school.